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*JESUS AS LORD*

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In successive discussions of the title Son of God, which seems to have been Jesus' own self-designation, and Son of Man, which would seem to have been applied to him after his death by the primitive Aramaic-speaking community of believers in his second coming, we have sought to disentangle primitive from secondary tradition. We have particularly emphasized the fact that in its distinctive principles Jesus' own teaching attaches itself to the primitive form of the messianic ideal—Israel as Yahweh's son; not the later theocratic—the Davidic heir to the throne as Son of God; nor the still later apocalyptic—the supernatural deliverer coming on the clouds of heaven as the fulfilment of the promise. In agreement with this view of the teaching of Jesus, our earliest documents, the Pauline epistles, make sonship in the ethical and religious sense the essence of the glad tidings. Since the publication of our argument our conclusions have been confirmed by the important newly-discovered document, the *Odes of Solomon*. The confirmation is especially strong if the view of Harnack be taken, that the Odes in their original form are Jewish, rather than the view of their discoverer, J. Rendel Harris, who regards them as Christian. The Odes give irrefutable evidence of the existence in first-century Judaism, or at least in primitive Christian circles, of a doctrine of sonship in the ethical and religious sense closely in line with what we have urged as the distinctive element in the messianic consciousness of Jesus. The ideal of the odist for Israel is an ideal of spiritual sonship. By the knowledge and love of the Beloved, "the Most High and Merciful," Israel is guaranteed not only sonship to God, but immortality, an eternal dwelling in God's presence.

The point was also emphasized against those who regard the

title Son of Man as "the favorite self-designation of Jesus," and who in logical consistency make apocalyptic eschatology the dominant note in his message, that of three great sources of evidence, (1) the Pauline epistles, (2) Petrine tradition as embodied in Acts and the groundwork of Mark, (3) the Matthaean Precepts of the Lord, it is only the third which gives independent evidence of the currency of the title; and this source, corresponding to the Q-document of critics, is, if not the latest, certainly not the earliest of the three. To the Pauline gospel the title Son of Man is completely unknown. To the Petrine, so far as we are able to reproduce it, it is equally unknown. Its occurrence is strictly limited to the Aramaic source which circulated in that portion of the church which looked to James the Lord's brother as "the bishop of bishops," and to writings directly affected by this Judaeae influence, such as our canonical gospels, including one occurrence in Acts. In early post-canonical literature we find it used only by Hegesippus in his report of the martyrdom of James,<sup>1</sup> by the Gospel according to the Hebrews,<sup>2</sup> and by the so-called Traditions of Matthias.<sup>3</sup>

It remains for us to show, as the final link in our chain of evidence for the priority of the ethical and religious form of Christian messianism, that there is no vacancy in the gospels of Peter and of Paul on this score; but that in their christology the doctrine that "Jesus is Lord" occupies the place taken in Matthaean tradition by the doctrine, "Jesus is the Son of Man."

In the Pauline epistles and the Petrine speeches of Acts we meet with many expressions which throw light upon the real origin of the worship of Jesus as a superhuman being. Occurring as they do in completely stereotyped form, and in documents some of which at least are much older than Q and none of which betrays any knowledge of the title Son of Man, they certainly justify the inference that the doctrine, "Jesus is Lord," is not a mere substitute for the Danielic form, "Jesus is the Son of Man," nor an outgrowth from it; but that the two represent rather parallel and independent types of christology. "Jesus is the Son

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Euseb., *H. E.* ii, 23 13.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 2.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Clem. Alex., *Strom.* iv, 6 35.

of Man" may be regarded, so to speak, as a translation into the dialect and phraseology of Palestine of the doctrine which Greek-speaking Christians expressed in the confession, "Jesus is Lord."

We have seen in the preceding discussion that Paul does not hesitate to employ such Aramaic terms as *Abba*, *Maranatha*, *Amen*; he certainly does not shrink from addressing gentile converts as "men that know the law." It is, therefore, not easy to suppose that he avoided the title, the Son of Man, the "favorite self-designation of Jesus," because it could not be understood in Greek without a reference to Daniel 7 12-14. No more could the Hebrew phrase *ben 'adam* in Aramaic; yet it found currency there in the form *bar 'enash*, and, having made the transition from Hebrew to Aramaic, it surely could, had there been occasion, have similarly passed over into Greek. In point of fact we know that it ultimately did. But not in Paul's day. It was quite a different term which he borrows from the Aramaic. In fact there lies an important clew to the actual beginnings of christology in that watchword, *Maranatha*, which comes down to Paul from a period so primitive that Aramaic is still the general language of the church. For the watchword of the church echoed by Paul is not *barnash atha*, "the Son of Man cometh," but *maran atha*, "our Lord cometh." It is in fact, as we shall see, the title *κύριος*, the Greek equivalent of the Aramaic *mar*, which is made prominent wherever the question concerns Jesus' divine authority. Only such a title as this, indicative of the holder's right to command obedience in all things, could be expressive of Christian fealty. Accordingly we find it in more than one passage where it is clearly chosen to express this sense of fealty.

First of all, the Pauline passage where this Aramaic watchword occurs (1 Cor. 16 22) is itself significant, not merely because First Corinthians is the best authenticated writing of the New Testament, and some twenty years older than our earliest gospel, but because on this occasion Paul coins a phrase intended to be distinctive of the genuine Christian. Side by side stand the Greek title and the Aramaic equivalent: "If any man loveth not *the Lord* (τὸν κύριον), let him be accursed. *Maranatha*." Paul's own dictum is here reinforced by the phrase caught up from

primitive assemblies, kindled to enthusiasm by "visions and revelations of the Lord," assemblies where,

"with echoes long and loud,  
The mighty Maranatha smote the air."

Another passage from this same epistle is still more indicative of the part played by the word in primitive tests of loyalty. When it became necessary to distinguish real from pretended utterances of the Spirit, the test which Paul offered was this: "No man can say *Jesus is Lord* but by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12 3). This is surely intended not as an ordinary pious ejaculation, but as a solemn confession. The principle laid down is manifestly fallacious unless the utterance of the confession is understood as a pledge of fealty and obedience.

Or, if further evidence be required that the title Lord embodied—at least for the Pauline churches—the distinctive element of the Christian's faith, let us take the passage where Paul formulates the essential content of the common faith in writing to believers in Rome—and these were no mere converts of his own who might be supposed to represent only some special type. The form in which the confession is drawn is this: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth *Jesus as Lord*, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10 9). Once more, outward expression of the common faith of believers takes the form of the confession, *Jesus is Lord*.

These passages are selected from the greater Pauline epistles because it is apparent from their nature that the author is not coining a new title, but purposely employing the one which has most universal acceptance, both in Greek-speaking and Aramaic-speaking churches, and which most fully expresses in a single word the full content of the common faith. That word is *κύριος*, the imperial title expressive of complete sovereignty, ownership, and dominion. When used absolutely, its reference could be to nothing less than supreme lordship over the created world. When used with the genitive of the pronoun ("my Lord," "our Lord," etc.), it expressed a relation of personal loyalty, for which the abstract "Son of Man" gave little opportunity. If anywhere, then, surely in the phrase, "Jesus is Lord," we have the very

phraseology of what was termed "confession of (or in) the Name." Yes; for this lordship, or sovereignty, of Jesus must not only be loyally maintained against the empire, but "angels and principalities and powers in the heavenly places" are to be made subject unto him.<sup>4</sup>

Turn for a moment to a later document. A writer who in the name of "Peter" encourages the Pauline churches of Asia Minor to steadfastness under persecution urges heroism to "glorify God in this name" (of Christ), but inwardly to "sanctify in their hearts *Christ as Lord*." This was after Paul's death, and against an imperial despot who had directed that his decrees be issued in the form "*dominus et deus noster*." But to Paul also this name, Lord, marked the prerogative of Christ against both earthly and heavenly potentates. Every knee must bow, of beings in heaven, or beings on earth, or beings under the earth, and every tongue must join in the supreme confession "that *Jesus Christ is Lord*, to the glory of God the Father." This, then, is "the name which is above every name" given to Jesus because of his supreme exemplification of the principle, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted,"—the name of Lord.

It will not be without significance to our further inquiry into the origins of this primitive christological confession to ask where Paul finds the name of Lord so given. For answer we need only turn to the parallel passage on the exaltation of Jesus in 1 Cor. 15 25, where a few words, quoted from the scripture that Paul has in mind, reveal the fact that he is thinking of the famous messianic Psalm: "The Lord said unto *my Lord*, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."<sup>5</sup> And it needs only the further comparison of Rom. 14 10 f., where the same

<sup>4</sup> It is not within the province of the present discussion to point out the practical superiority of a formula expressive of the sentiment of personal loyalty over a formula expressive only of abstract belief. Nevertheless, in days like ours, when efforts are being made to find a watchword of union, one can hardly resist asking the question, Why not return to the earliest attested of all? Thousands who differ widely in their definitions of the person of Christ, and their theories of the nature of this redemption, stand ready to unite upon the principle of a common loyalty to a common Master. Why not unite on the confession of "*Jesus as Lord*"?

<sup>5</sup> Cf. also Rom. 8 34, Eph. 1 20, Col. 3 1.

fundamental passage (Is. 45 23) is used as in Phil. 2 11, to prove that this bowing of the knee and confession of the tongue are to be "before the judgment-seat of Christ." In other words, this is the Pauline form of the doctrine of Jesus as the Son of Man.

But herewith we begin a transition from passages which merely evidence the practice of the Pauline churches to another group which evidence both the practice and its origin, and which appear not in Pauline literature only, but in that which has best title to represent to us the Petrine type of doctrine.

This can hardly be said to be the case with First Peter, an epistle which even Zahn acknowledges to be Pauline in contents, though bearing—to his mind legitimately—the name of Peter. Because of this Pauline character of First Peter we have simply placed its exhortation to the Pauline churches to "sanctify in their hearts Jesus as Lord" in the group of Pauline evidences. Second Peter, on the other hand, is so generally recognized as both spurious and late as to merit no place in serious comparison of Petrine with Pauline tradition. The case is different, however, with the speeches placed in the mouth of Peter by the author of Acts. These are admitted to present, whether incorporated from earlier sources or composed by the evangelist, a peculiar and very primitive type of christology, easily distinguished from the Pauline because it has no trace whatever of the conception of the pre-existence of Jesus or of the atoning significance of his death. Here, then, is at least an early and independent type of christology, entitled to be designated "Petrine," if only because it is presented under the name and authority of Peter and is in reality different from the Matthaean on the one side and the Pauline on the other. It should not surprise us that the nearest affinity of this type of christology is with the Gospel of Mark in its more fundamental outlines, those least affected by accommodation to Pauline ideas or the influence of the Q-source; for the Markan, too, is a type credibly reported to rest upon the teaching of Peter. But the main point of our reference to the christology of Acts is that the author grounds the church's faith upon the same confessional basis as does Paul, and by appeal to the same scripture. The starting-point of "Luke's" story of the spread

of the gospel is Peter's demonstration to the multitudes assembled at Pentecost, partly on the basis of the phenomena of "spiritual gifts," and partly on the basis of the Psalm quoted in 1 Cor. 15 25, that God had given to Jesus *the name of Lord*.

For the author of the Petrine speeches of Acts one demonstration is vital, all else hangs upon it. It is the demonstration from the coincidence of prophetic scripture and present experience that God hath "made that same Jesus, whom ye [his countrymen] crucified, *both Lord and Christ*." In the conception of "Luke" this marks the beginning of the Christian church. His preliminary chapter (Acts 1) merely recapitulates the ending of Jesus' earthly career, glorified as it had been by the promise of an enthronement soon to follow. Until Pentecost Jesus had not been Lord or Christ. He had been Yahweh's Servant sent to bless Israel by turning them away, every man from his iniquities (Acts 3 26). Pentecost is the Servant's coronation day. From henceforth as Lord he occupies "the throne of glory." "The heavens must receive him," says Peter in his next address, "until the times of restoration of all things." Then God in his mercy will send him *as the Christ*. For it is the nationalistic phase of christology, rather than the apocalyptic, or transcendental, which here appears as the distinctive trait supplementary to the Pauline. The new fulfilments of Scripture appealed to besides Ps. 110 1 are the promises of the outpouring of the spirit of prophecy (Joel 2 28-31), the promises of an heir to the throne of David (Ps. 132 11, 2 Sam. 7 12 f.), and the "prophet like unto Moses" (Deut. 18 15). True, the nationalistic christology shows the influence of apocalypse. It has been, so to speak, transcendentalized. But the only actual trace of the doctrine of the Son of Man "coming with clouds" is in the angels' promise to the witnesses of the ascension: "Ye shall see him in like manner coming again" (Acts 1 11). The real difference from Pauline christology is not that the author reverts toward the apocalyptic doctrine of a pre-existent or transcendental Son of Man. On the contrary, he does not even adopt Paul's doctrine of incarnation. As Pfleiderer has so justly and discriminatingly pointed out, the christology of the "Petrine" source of Acts is a doctrine of apotheosis, the apotheosis of the Suffering Servant. "Peter"



merely supplements the Pauline doctrine that "Jesus is Lord" by adding an expression of the national hope that he will soon reappear as "the Christ."

Peter's preaching to gentiles is represented in Acts 10 36-43, where the gospel message is summarized in a preliminary statement as the doctrine that Jesus Christ "is Lord of all" (*πάντων κύριος*).

Surely, if the dominant note in Jesus' teaching was the doctrine of the Danielic, transcendental Being to appear upon the clouds, and if Son of Man was his favorite self-designation, it is surprising that "Peter" should lay the very foundations of the church's faith in these successive speeches, and never once employ the title or allude to the predictions. The doctrine of the Lordship is here. It is supplemented now by the doctrine of a preliminary work of the Christ-to-be,—Jesus the Servant sent to effect the great Repentance, the prophet like unto Moses, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, the son and heir of David—of which little or nothing appears in Paul. The doctrine of the coming Day of Judgment is present, as in Paul (compare Acts 10 42 and 17 31 with 1 Thess. 1 10). Only the phraseology employed, and the scriptures appealed to, give no more ground than in Paul to think of the title Son of Man, or indeed of any apocalyptic teaching of Jesus, as the starting-point of the Petrine christology.

To judge, then, by these two strands of primitive tradition, the Pauline and "Petrine," it was not a self-designation of Jesus, but the manifestation of him as Lord, which became the starting-point of the faith. This result is in complete conformity with the thorough and scholarly discussion of Professor S. J. Case on "ΚΥΡΙΟΣ as a Title for Christ,"<sup>6</sup> wherein he disproves the current idea that the deification of Jesus was a result of the use of *κύριος* in the Septuagint as a rendering of the Hebrew divine name, and the application to Jesus of Old Testament passages in which the term occurred. The practice existed, but it is not primitive; nor could the confusion have occurred in an Aramaic-speaking community or among those familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures.

<sup>6</sup> Journal of Biblical Literature, vol. xxvi (1907), pp. 151-161.

It is most conspicuous in writers, like the author of Hebrews,<sup>7</sup> whose only acquaintance with the Scriptures seems to be through the Greek. Neither the address of prayer to Jesus, nor the application to him of Scripture that originally referred to God, gives adequate warrant for the theory in question. As Case points out, prayer addressed to Jesus—always exceptional, and progressively rarer as we approach the earliest times—implies only “that God and Christ have similar positions *in relation to men*,” not that Jesus is treated as God. In particular the one supreme messianic gift, potentially inclusive of all others, is the gift of “the Spirit.” As a pledge of adoption to sonship and heirship, and as the “earnest” of immortality, it is naturally regarded as the all-inclusive object of prayer (compare Luke 11 13 with Mt. 7 11). But the Spirit, while ultimately “the gift of God” (Acts 8 19 f., Jn. 4 10), is in a special and peculiar way the gift of Christ. The “outpouring” of it is secured by his exaltation to the messianic throne (Acts 2 33, Eph. 4 7-12); it is conditioned by his going to the Father (Jn. 16 7 ff., 20 17, 22). Prayer in general, then, might well be “in the name” of Jesus; prayer for the Spirit particularly we might even expect would sometimes be addressed to the risen “Lord.” If cases exist in early times of prayer so addressed, they certainly do not imply confusion between his person and that of the Supreme Deity. On this point the philological argument of Professor Case is conclusive.

In reality the attempt to account for the apotheosis of Jesus by literary causes falls little short of absurdity. The worship of Jesus did not originate in the scriptorium. It was a product of real experience among men most of whom had little to do with the scribes. After it had begun, Scriptural apologetic came into play, and exercised an important, perhaps a dominant, influence upon the form and mode of its development. And this is reflected in the philological phenomena. As Case has again pointed out, when Paul “writes *μπαβαθα* to the Corinthians it is per-

<sup>7</sup> A notable instance is the quotation of Ps. 102 25 ff. in Heb. 1 10-12 as if applying to Christ as creator. See the present writer's discussion in *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, vol. iii, 1902. Here the doctrine is of course a Pauline doctrine.

fectly plain that he is passing along a phrase which originated with Aramaic-speaking Christians." Moreover, the title embodied, *mar* or *maran*, was not taken from Scripture, but from the ordinary usage of common life. It is the exact equivalent of the Greek κύριος, ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν, which Paul and "Peter" substitute for it. We certainly "may believe that Jesus was called 'Lord' even during his earthly life."<sup>8</sup> It was not this usage, however, which gave significance to the title, but the experience of those who after his death felt that they had received a manifestation of his God-given sovereignty. We may at first be tempted by the coincident appeal in so many different passages<sup>9</sup> to Ps. 110 1 to think of this Psalm itself, either in its original form, or as employed by Jesus, according to Mk. 12 35 f., as having given rise to the conviction. It is true that there is much to indicate that even Paul was not the first to hit upon this scripture as a proof-text in support of the Lordship. Its apologetic use no doubt reacted upon the doctrine it was used to support. But here, as elsewhere, the conviction came first, and the proof-text was discovered afterward. Case is certainly right in saying, "It was not any similarity of usage between *yhwh* and *mar* that led to the custom [of applying Old Testament language spoken of Yahweh to Christ], for in Aramaic this did not exist; but the practice was due to an apologetic necessity on the part of those who claimed that God had exalted their Messiah to a place of heavenly lordship."

Our real question accordingly is this: What was it which produced the conviction of the exaltation of Jesus to "the throne of glory" in the minds of the primitive disciples, an exaltation for which the suitable term to those of Aramaic speech seemed to be *maran* and to those of Greek speech ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν? To judge by the coincidence between Acts 2 32 f. and Eph. 4 7-11, it was the phenomena of Pentecost accepted as tokens of a sovereignty conferred upon Jesus. The spiritual gifts were proofs to his followers, who found themselves thus suddenly

<sup>8</sup> Case, *ibid.* p. 161.

<sup>9</sup> In addition to Acts 2 34 f. and 1 Cor. 15 25, see especially Rom. 8 34, Eph. 1 20, Col. 3 1. Pss. 110 and 8, combined in 1 Cor. 15 25-27, are made almost the entire Scripture substratum of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

"endued with power from on high," that he had been exalted and enthroned.<sup>10</sup> Fundamentally, the argument of Paul and of "Peter" is the same. The phenomenon of the gift of the Spirit is the datum to be explained. Both revert at once to the common scripture: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand." Thereafter the apologetic varies. According to "Peter" this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel concerning "the last days." According to Paul this is that which is referred to by the Psalmist when he describes the triumph of Yahweh over his enemies: "When he ascended on high he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men." The exaltation, or ascension, is proved by the visible and audible phenomena. The Scripture citations are apologetic proof-texts. Latest of all comes the narrative of visible transportation of the glorified body of Jesus through the clouds, while angels explain the significance of the occurrence to astonished bystanders.<sup>11</sup>

It is among the Scripture proof-texts cited after the event, and not among the causes of the belief, that we must reckon the argument put in the mouth of Jesus by our oldest evangelist in Mk. 12 35-37. The reader will find in my comments on the passage in the volume entitled *Beginnings of Gospel Story* (pp. 160 f., 175) the reasons for regarding this fourth Colloquy in the Temple as an addition by the evangelist to the series which precedes introducing successively the moot questions of Pharisee, Sadducee, and Scribe. The appended colloquy introduces the distinctive tenet of the Christian, the Lordship of the Christ. Jesus debates with the unbelieving Jews the doctrine of his own ascension to "the right hand of God." And the passage by which he is represented as defending it is the same which at the time of Mark's writing had long been a *locus classicus* of Pauline tradition (and probably of Petrine as well) to prove the connection of the risen Jesus with the phenomena of "spiritual gifts."

Were it possible to invert the literary relation of Mark and the

<sup>10</sup> In the Gospel of Matthew, which was not followed by a record of the mighty works of the Spirit, the Lordship is expressed by a declaration of Jesus (Mt. 28 18; cf. Mk. 16 17).

<sup>11</sup> On the later and legendary character of Acts 1 6-14 as compared with Acts 2 15 ff., and still more with Acts 3 1-4 31, see Harnack, *Acts*, ad loc.

Pauline epistles, or even to look upon the appended colloquy of Mk. 12 35-37 as of equal antiquity with the series preceding in verses 13-34, there would be better ground for the traditional idea that Jesus himself was the originator of the apologetic based on Ps. 110 1. In reality the proof-text proves too much. Its true application is to the enthronement, the ascension, the seating "at the right hand of God." It is Paul and "Peter," then, who use it correctly, and Mark, together with his dependent fellow-evangelists, who introduces it *mal à propos*.

Our attempt to trace the history of the doctrine of Jesus as Lord indicates then that its origin was in no sense of the word literary. The conviction of the Lordship<sup>12</sup> was the most vital and fundamental one for every Christian, no matter what the special type of his belief. He could be known as a Christian because he confessed "Jesus as Lord." But the conviction did not rest upon wrong interpretation of the Greek Old Testament. That was a consequence rather than a cause. It did not rest primarily upon Old Testament passages at all; though it was affected by these. It did not even rest upon remembered expressions of, or titles applied to, Jesus; though the fact that he had been commonly called *mar* or κύριε (cf. Jn. 13 13) had doubtless its effect, as well as the fact that he had spoken of "the Coming," or "the Day," of the Son of Man. The belief rested upon a great experience, the occurrence of a single, definite day, an occurrence which all Christians from that time forward regarded as "a designation with power of Jesus as the Son of God,"<sup>13</sup> a day ever memorable as the coronation-day of the risen Jesus. Can we point to such a day?

In a sense we have already pointed to it. Even if Acts did not make of Pentecost the occasion which it does, we should know from the allusions of Paul to an outpouring of the Spirit experienced by every believer in some degree, and by the church as a whole from the beginning, that some great manifestation of the kind had marked its origin. We should naturally think

<sup>12</sup> Whether the Lordship (κυριότης) despised by the heretics in Jude 8, 2 Pet. 2 10, is that of Christ is doubtful.

<sup>13</sup> Such, according to Sanday and Headlam, should be the rendering of Rom. 1 4.

of that day on which, as Paul relates, an assembled company of "more than five hundred brethren at once" had seen the Lord. But this is by no means all. Few things can furnish historical evidence so strong as an institution, observance, or rite, directly traceable to a given event. Such an observance, or institution, can in our judgment be surely traced to the day of Pentecost, and to this event. The institution exists today. Its existence is attested in the oldest documents of the New Testament; though it so happens that its distinctive name is not mentioned until the Revelation of John, written about 95 A.D. In Rev. 1 10 the day which in the Pauline epistles (1 Cor. 16 2), the travel-document of Acts (Acts 20 7), and the gospels is referred to simply as "the first day of the week" and appears merely as a weekly day of assembly, is called "the Lord's day" (ἡ κυριακὴ ἡμέρα). In our judgment a strictly critical analysis of the evidence will show that "the Lord's day" originally commemorated the day of Jesus' enthronement "at the right hand of God." It was the day when "God made him both Lord and Christ."

By the time our gospels were written the day had come to be regarded as commemorating Jesus' resurrection. In fact, Paul himself makes the "resurrection" (return from Sheol?) to have occurred "on the third day," which (the crucifixion having occurred on a Friday) would make it to have fallen on "the first day of the week." This, accordingly, is the date on which our gospels place the visit of the women to the sepulchre and the finding of it empty; and in common acceptance the weekly observance of "the Lord's day" is supposed to commemorate this event. Why it should be a weekly observance, when the celebration of the resurrection was annual, and why it should fall on the day when (according to later forms of tradition) the resurrection *manifestations* began, instead of the day of Christ's actual victory over "him that had the power of death," the common theory does not attempt to explain.

Is it, then, the fact that observance of "the Lord's day" began with a fixation of this "first day of the week" as that on which Jesus "rose from the dead," whether with Paul as an inference from "the Scriptures," or with the evangelists from the report of the women and other phenomena connected with the empty sepul-

chre? We venture to say that the objections to accepting this as the origin of the observance are absolutely insuperable. Such observance could only begin in commemoration of some great and joyous, but above all perfectly definite and undisputed, event. The experiences of the women and the inferences of Paul from Scripture were not occurrences of this kind. Even were it possible to know what "scripture" Paul has in mind when he reports it as the common faith that Jesus "rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures," we cannot imagine the primitive community sitting down in conference and saying: "Go to, now. We need a day on which to commemorate the triumph of Jesus over the gates of death; let it be, then, the first day of the week; for according to Hosea it must have been 'on the third day' (Hos. 6 (2). The crucifixion occurred on the sixth day of the week. Let us then substitute the 'first day of the week' for the Sabbath, and institute thus a weekly memorial of the resurrection." Equally unimaginable is the origin of such an observance from the report of "certain women which were early at the grave, and, when they found him not, reported that they had seen a vision of angels which said that he was alive." Granted even the trustworthiness of these late traditions ignored by Paul, why celebrate this day rather than the day when he "was seen of Cephas"? In point of fact the whole group of traditions which centres about the sepulchre, found empty by the women and others "on the third day," is absolutely excluded as accounting for the observance of "the Lord's day," because they manifestly come to light at a time long after the observance of the Lord's day had become well established. Had the early church wished to celebrate the beginning of the *manifestations* of the Lord, they would certainly have taken the day of the manifestation to Peter. But that, according to all we can learn about it, took place at the Sea of Galilee, the mere physical conditions making it practically certain that it was not so early as "the third day." Our only direct witness (Gospel of Peter 14 58-60) states, in fact, that Peter's return to Galilee did not take place until "the last day of Unleavened Bread," a full week after the crucifixion. In point of fact the early church did not attempt to date the resurrection by the discovery of the empty tomb, nor by the connected group of

appearances in Jerusalem, all of which concern themselves with the later disputes about the nature of the resurrection body. Two characteristics of Paul's recapitulation of the resurrection story, as proclaimed not by himself alone but by all authorities, are fatal to the supposition that the sepulchre-group of traditions had anything to do with the origin of the observance of the Lord's day: (1) the entire absence from his list of proofs of any one of these traditions; (2) the fact that the resurrection (that is, the return from Sheol "clothed upon" with the heavenly "body of glory") is dated "on the third day" because of certain "scriptures" and for no other reason assigned. It is hardly probable that the passages in Paul's mind included Hos. 6 2, natural as this might seem; for the New Testament writers never make use of this particular passage. It does not seem probable that Paul rested on Jonah 1 17 like the author of Mt. 12 40. But difficult though it is to say what particular passages of Scripture Paul had in mind, it is not impossible to say what he meant by "the third day," and that it had reference not to the succession of the days of the week at all, but to those of the month, or rather of the feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread.

First Corinthians is written from Ephesus, apparently in the midst of the celebration of a (Christian) Passover. In 5 7 the Corinthians are exhorted to "put away the old leaven, . . . for Christ our Passover hath been sacrificed for us." In like manner the chapter on the resurrection borrows the imagery of the temple service. Christ's death, burial, and resurrection are compared to the wheat buried in the ground but restored again at harvest. The first day of Passover—Mazzoth (Nisan 14) was the day when the lamb was slaughtered. "The third day" in the year of the crucifixion was the day of Firstfruits (*ἀπαρχή*, Nisan 16), when the first sheaf of the wheat-harvest was lifted up to God. When, in the midst of this comparison, Paul writes: "But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits (*ἀπαρχή*) of them that slept," and in the same connection points to his burial, and to his having been raised "on the third day," the significance of the date can be no other than the fact of its coincidence with the ritual of Firstfruits, just as the crucifixion had coincided with the slaughtering of the passover lamb. The fact



that in the particular year in question this happened to be also a "first day of the week" was at the utmost a secondary consideration.<sup>14</sup>

We are led by this glimpse into Paul's commemoration of the death and resurrection to a realization of what event the early church actually did attempt to celebrate, and when they really dated it.

The crisis in the life of Peter referred to in the prayer of Jesus, "Simon, . . . when thou art turned again strengthen thy brethren," was worthy to be commemorated by the church, because it unquestionably was the crisis of its own birth. Had the church thought of celebrating the beginning of the resurrection *faith*, it must have noted and observed the day when in Galilee, some ten days or more after the crucifixion, so far as we can judge, the risen Lord "appeared to Cephas." It did not do so. Either because this humble beginning was overshadowed by the later, more spectacular triumph, or for some other reason, Pentecost was looked upon as the real birthday of the church, and Peter's experience was but vaguely connected with it. What the church was intent upon commemorating, even so early as the time of Paul's stay in Ephesus, was Jesus' victory over the gates of Sheol. This triumph of the Prince of Life (ὁ ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ζωῆς) over the prince of darkness and death was commemorated, however, in an *annual* festival, coincident with the Passover of the Jews, and in fact with the equinoctial feasts of the many cults which make the vernal new birth of nature a symbol of their resurrection hope. In Paul's time Jewish ritual was still adhered to with sufficient closeness to warrant the marking of a separate correspondence of the crucifixion with the slaughter of the lamb on Nisan 14, and the resurrection with the lifting up of the wave sheaf on Nisan 16. But a century later this refinement has disappeared. The quartodecimans are still celebrating the Christian Passover in Asia where Paul had celebrated it with them, but it is

<sup>14</sup> Clement of Alexandria shows precisely this point of view in arguing for the observance of the fourteenth of Nisan as the anniversary of the death and resurrection. "And the resurrection confirms this [argument for quartodeciman observance]. At all events [Jesus] rose on the third day, which is the first day of the weeks of wheat-harvest, on which it was prescribed that the priest should offer the sheaf [of firstfruits]. (Citation in Paschal Chronicle.)

only the single great Passover day which is remembered.<sup>15</sup> Death and resurrection are celebrated together on the fourteenth Nisan, "the day when the people [that is, the Jews] put away the leaven." Great controversy arises because at Rome and in the West, where the hebdomadal system has become supreme, men wish to insist that "the mystery of the resurrection" shall not be celebrated on any other but "the Lord's day." Asia and the East remain firm in the authority of apostolic precedent, and again and again reiterate the nature and meaning of their observance. "The fourteenth is the true Passover of the Lord, the one great sacrifice, the Servant of God slain instead of the [passover] lamb, he who was bound having bound the strong man [that is, Satan, who had the power of death; cf. Mt. 12 29 and Heb. 2 14 f.], and he who was judged judging quick and dead, . . . who was buried on the day of the Passover, a stone being set upon the tomb." <sup>16</sup>

But while we can be perfectly certain that it was the victory of Christ over the power of Sheol which was celebrated by quartodecimans in the annual breaking of fast on the fourteenth of Nisan, and while the greatest importance was attached to the exact determination of the true date of this single day, it is equally certain that the ancient Oriental observance did not attempt to determine from the traditions of manifestations, discoveries of the empty condition of the tomb, Scriptural predictions, or otherwise, just how long after the crucifixion this triumph known as the resurrection, or return from Sheol, had occurred. Indeed, a letter of Basilides, bishop of the parishes in Pentapolis, consults Dionysius of Alexandria as to the hour when the fast commemorative of the Lord's passion should be terminated by the feast of the resurrection, some of the brethren thinking they should do it at cock-crow, others "from the evening." "He was at a loss," says Drummond, "how to fix an exact hour; for while it would be 'acknowledged by all alike' that they ought to begin their festivities after the time of the resurrection of our Lord, and to humble their souls by fasting up to that time, the Gospels

<sup>15</sup> Epiphanius, *Haer.* ἀπαξ γὰρ τοῦ ἔτους μίαν ἡμέραν τοῦ πάσχα οἱ τοιοῦτοι (quartodecimans) φιλονεικῶς ἀγορεύουσιν.

<sup>16</sup> Apollinaris of Hierapolis in Paschal Chronicle.

*contained no exact statement of the hour at which he rose."*<sup>17</sup> Dionysius in his reply does not pretend that he can solve this question of the exact time of the resurrection, but recommends a latitudinarian tolerance of difference in mode of observance.

It is perfectly clear from this and other accounts of ancient commemoration of Jesus' death and resurrection that the two were celebrated together, and that no attempt was made to draw such inferences as moderns draw from the story of the women at the sepulchre regarding the day and hour when Jesus had been (in Pauline language) "clothed upon" with his "body of glory." If for a time memory lingered of the Pauline correspondence between Firstfruits on Nisan 16 and a scripture (Hos. 6 2?) predicting resurrection on "the third day," it soon disappeared. Clement's reference stands isolated. The second-century church, at least in the Orient, thought of, and celebrated, Jesus' death and resurrection as practically simultaneous. Indeed, the Gospel of Peter makes even the ascension take place from the cross itself immediately after the great cry.<sup>18</sup>

Dr. Erwin Preuschen even goes so far as to say:

In the Orient Sunday was not known as the day of resurrection, and hence there was no weekly celebration of this day [but cf. Acts 20 7 and Rev. 1 10], but in the Occident Wednesday and Friday were regular fast-days, and Sunday was celebrated as the day of resurrection. It is doubtful whether the Occident possessed in addition a special day in the year for the commemoration of the death and of the resurrection of the Lord.<sup>19</sup>

We cannot agree with this scholar that the hebdomadal system of the church originated in the West and was unknown to the East. It is essentially Jewish in character, and would have been most pronounced among the earliest churches, where synagogue practice was taken over with least alteration. The very document on which Dr. Preuschen seems to base his statement regarding semi-weekly fasts<sup>20</sup> is almost certainly of Syrian origin, and

<sup>17</sup> Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel, p. 471. The italics are ours.

<sup>18</sup> "And the Lord cried out, saying, My Power, my Power, thou hast forsaken me. And as soon as he had spoken he was taken up" (*καὶ εἰπὼν ἀνελήφθη*).

<sup>19</sup> New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia, Art. "Easter," vol. iv (1909), pp. 46 f.

<sup>20</sup> Didache, 8 1.

the fasts on the fourth day of the week and the Preparation (*παρασκευή*) are expressly set over against those of "the hypocrites" on "the second and fifth" (cf. Luke 18 12). The hebdomadal system of the church is certainly of synagogue origin, all the more because such pains are taken to distinguish its festal "first day" from the festal "seventh day" of "the hypocrites," and its fourth-day and sixth-day fasts from their fasts on the second and fifth days of the week. But Preuschen is entirely correct in saying that observance of "the Lord's day" had no such origin as we of the West, following the Roman tradition of Mark and the Synoptic Gospels,<sup>21</sup> have been accustomed to suppose. His appeal to the immemorial rite of quartodeciman observance on the part of all the more ancient churches, explicitly and rightly justified as it was by apostolic tradition and practice, is conclusive on this point. Preuschen's inference from the history of the long controversy is as follows:

The Christians of Asia Minor must have celebrated the mystery of the resurrection on the day on which the fast [the annual fast commemorating the Passion] was broken, and this day was not Sunday but the fourteenth of Nisan, around which the controversy revolved. This conclusion is justified by the account of Epiphanius concerning the quartodecimans (that is, those who commemorated the Lord's death on the 14th), in which he relates that fasting and the celebration of the resurrection took place on the same day. . . . The Christians of Asia Minor appealed to an old apostolic tradition according to which Jesus rose on the evening of the day of his death, and the opposition of the Occidentals was directed mainly against the commemoration of death and resurrection on the same day.

In one respect this statement requires correction. It was not the "resurrection" of Jesus in our sense of the word that quartodecimans commemorated "on the same day" as the crucifixion (better, after a vigil corresponding to the vigil of Passover, which extended in many cases "until cock-crowing"), nor did they hold that he "rose" (that is, manifested his presence to his disciples on earth) on the fourteenth. They accepted the same gospels that we do, and were indignant at the charge of going counter to them. They probably held just as Paul did, and perhaps on the

<sup>21</sup> Even the quartodeciman Fourth Gospel is affected on this point by its predecessors (cf. Jn. 20).

basis of the same "scriptures," that "he was raised (ἡγέρθη) on the third day," that is, on the sixteenth, or day of Firstfruits.<sup>22</sup> What the quartodeciman festival commemorated was, as Apollinarius clearly (though somewhat rhetorically) states, the "binding of the strong man," that is, the church's victory over "the gates of Sheol," accomplished when Christ "through death overcame him that had the power of death, and delivered us who through fear of death were all our life-time subject to bondage." It is the true Oriental, pre-Christian doctrine of the "Harrowing of Hell" which underlies it, and is reflected in unmistakable terms in the fifth of Hippolytus's *Heads against Caius*:

The heretic Caius [ca. 180 A.D.] objects [to Rev. 20 2 f.] that "Satan had already been bound, according to what is written [in Mt. 12 29] that Christ entered the house of the strong man, and bound him, and despoiled him of us his vessels."

It thus becomes unmistakably clear that the celebration of the Passover among the Oriental churches, as taken over from the synagogue through the very hands of the apostles themselves, became in Christian interpretation a feast of redemption indeed as before, but—of redemption from the darkness and bondage of Sheol. The imagery is perfectly familiar to us from the epistles of Paul, and must have been at least equally familiar to every communicant in "the Supper of the Lord." The mere date when it became known that the tomb was empty, or when individuals were lifted out of their despairing unbelief, whether by "visions of angels" or "manifestations of the Lord," was to the Oriental Christian's mind a matter of quite secondary importance. He resented the attempt of Rome and the West to force upon him a delay in the breaking of his fast until "the Lord's day"; and denied the validity of their ground, namely, that the Jerusalem traditions regarding the sepulchre, which since the days of Mark's Roman gospel had begun to supersede the Galilean as given by Paul (1 Cor. 15 1-11), proved "that the mystery of the Lord's resurrection from the dead" had taken place at a specified day and hour and therefore "should be celebrated on no other day than the Lord's day."

<sup>22</sup> Cf. the statement of Clement cited above, p. 219, note.

Our protracted inquiry into the primitive apostolic celebration of the resurrection will be justified by the importance of the result. We need not prolong it by a consideration, however interesting historically, or strong in corroboration, of the later attempts at harmonization. We can only refer the reader to Preuschen's explanation of the curious calculation of the "three days" in the Syriac *Didascalia*, which treats the three hours' darkness on the crucifixion day as a "night." We must also pass over his analogous explanation of the equally curious phraseology of Mt. 28 1. In our judgment the inquiry already fully justifies the statement with which we began, that at least so far as the ancient Oriental churches or those of apostolic or Pauline foundation are concerned, "the whole group of traditions which centres about the sepulchre, found empty by the women and others 'on the third day,' is absolutely excluded as accounting for the observance of 'the Lord's day.'" Their dating on that particular day is a *consequence*, not a cause of the practice.

But this leaves the practice itself still to be accounted for. Moreover, as we have just seen, the hebdomadal system, so far from being a mere Western innovation, as Preuschen appears to hold, is rooted in the most ancient apostolic observance. The innovation of the West consists merely in a perversion of its significance.

The three characteristics which should guide us to a more trustworthy judgment of the origin of "the Lord's day" are (1) its Jewish derivation, (2) its hebdomadal observance, (3) its festival character. It unquestionably began as a commemoration of some signal event in the history of the church. But we have seen that the resurrection was otherwise commemorated, and the mere accounts of "manifestations," even that to Peter, which in the earliest times was by far the most important, were not understood as determining the date of the Lord's triumph over Sheol. One "manifestation," however, did remain fixed in the memory of the church, not only because of the significance which from the beginning appears to have been attached to it, but because, as tradition most credibly avers, it coincided in date with the annual Jewish "Feast of Weeks." If any one day could be pointed to in the whole history of the church worthy of perpetual

commemoration as "the Lord's day," it would be the day when according to apostolic belief he was enthroned "at the right hand of God." The phenomena which accompanied the first "out-pouring of the Spirit" are appealed to in different ways by both "Peter" and Paul as proving the exaltation of Jesus to the supreme Lordship (Acts 2 33, Eph. 4 7-10). Both apostles see in it a fulfilment of the coronation ode, Ps. 110: "Yahweh said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." So vital was this conviction to the primitive church that it became incorporated in the earliest baptismal confession: "He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God."

But is it capable of proof that this supreme day of the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" was really a "first day of the week"; and, if so, was there any reason why it should be commemorated by weekly, instead of annual, observance? Both questions can be answered in the affirmative. Lev. 23 1-21 gives the "perpetual statute" of the feasts of wheat-harvest, introduced by the law of the Passover on Nisan 14 (ver. 5). Verses 9-14 give the "perpetual statute" of Firstfruits "on the morrow after the Sabbath" (Nisan 16). Next follows the "perpetual statute" of Pentecost, which celebrated the conclusion of the seven weeks of wheat-harvest:

And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath [of Passover week], from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering [Firstfruits]; seven sabbaths shall there be complete: even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days . . . and ye shall make proclamation on the selfsame day; there shall be an holy convocation unto you; ye shall do no servile work; it is a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

This law of Pentecost, or "the Feast of Weeks," is the foundation of the Jewish hebdomadal system. The new moon of Nisan fixed the annual calendar, whose first great feast was Passover at the full of the moon. Nisan 16 with its ritual of the sheaf of firstfruits was the starting-point for the seven-weeks' period of wheat-harvest, culminating in Pentecost, which would thus by

one interpretation always fall on "the first day of the week."<sup>23</sup> Moreover, it constituted a kind of second Sabbath, which, as we know, was the mode of observance of "the Lord's day" in the primitive Christian communities. Of these communities nothing is more certain than their assiduous devotion to the festal system of the Law. Passover and Pentecost, so far from being discontinued, were redoubled in significance. The redemption-feast, as we have seen, became the feast of the new and greater redemption through the death of Christ, a commemoration of his breaking of the bars of Sheol. Pentecost also continued in redoubled honor, observed even in the Pauline churches (1 Cor. 16 8, Acts 20 6, 16). And not only so, but the intervening period of the seven weeks of wheat-harvest long continued, as among the Jews, to be a period of continuous festivity, "the joy of harvest." Says Drummond, summarizing the statements of Eusebius:

So full of joy was the time [of Easter] that they feasted for seven whole weeks, till "another great feast," Pentecost, came in.<sup>24</sup>

No doubt whatever exists as to the new meaning attached by Jewish believers of the earliest time to the festival of Pentecost as an annual observance. It was the day on which he who had "become the first fruits of them that slept" entered into the full possession of the inheritance; and of this fact had given the assurance by a showering of the Earnest (*ἀρραβών*) upon his followers. But what of the old-time significance of the day to pious Jews as the foundation of the hebdomadal system? Is it likely that for Christians there would be in succeeding years no special significance in the period of rejoicing, which was marked for them above their fellow Jews by the fact that it had been filled with successive manifestations of the risen Lord? According to the tradition these manifestations had followed in rapid succession from the time when, some ten days after the crucifixion, the Lord "appeared to Cephas" down to Pentecost itself. It was

<sup>23</sup> Orthodox rabbinic interpretation of the legal date "the morrow after the sabbath" seems to have given it the sense as early as New Testament times of Nisan 16, regardless of the day of the week. Samaritan and sectarian practice made Firstfruits (and consequently Pentecost) fall invariably on Sunday.

<sup>24</sup> Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel, p. 466.



the period during which "he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days." And if early Christian observance of this festal period followed the same analogy as the other observances which they took over from the religion of their fathers, their kindred, and their own childhood, it would be almost inevitable that these "manifestations" should follow the hebdomadal order and begin to be dated uniformly on "the Lord's day."

If, then, we look to Paul, and not to the relatively late tradition of the Roman editor of our second canonical gospel, for an explanation of primitive observance of "the Lord's day," we shall find it in the wide-spread and primitive Oriental observance of a festival of corn-harvest, which among Jews at least covered a period of seven weeks, beginning and ending—in the year of the crucifixion—on "the first day of the week."

That inferences regarding the first Lord's day were based on Scripture rather than on tradition is clear from 1 Cor. 15 4. When at last tradition forsook the older Galilean narrative, and began to build on the Jerusalem form first known to us in the Roman Gospel of Mark, it was inevitable that the resurrection "on the third day" should be interpreted not with reference to Passover and Firstfruits, but with reference to "the Lord's day" of an established Christian hebdomadal system.

Our study of the primitive institution of "the Lord's day," intricate as the course of argument must be, leads to a conclusion thoroughly in harmony with that based upon literary and philological grounds. Primitive christology rested not so much upon Scripture, nor even upon phrases caught from the lips of Jesus, as upon the experience of the church. First had come the reawakened faith of Peter, then of the Twelve. Peter's brethren were "strengthened" in the conviction that God had raised Jesus from the dead. But the experience which created Christianity was the "baptism of the Spirit." In it was given the assurance of his exaltation to "the right hand of God." By it he was "manifested as the Son of God with power."

For believing Jew and Greek alike this implied that God would soon send Jesus back again to judgment as "the Christ." For it is Paul's teaching as well as Peter's that "we must all stand before

the judgment-seat of Christ." And so far as doctrinal content is concerned, no more was implied when Christians of Semitic mode of speech declared that Jesus had been manifested as "the Son of Man." It does, however, make a great difference to moderns whether by the strict canons of criticism we are obliged to hold that this christology of the apocalyptists, resting as it does upon the more morbid developments of later Judaism, has its ground in fundamental elements of the teaching of Jesus himself; or whether we may hold, in accordance with the argument now brought to its conclusion, that the doctrine of Jesus as "Son of Man," and the doctrine of Jesus as "Lord," are parallel developments of a common experience. That experience we believe to have been the gift of the Spirit of adoption which teaches us to cry Abba, Father. Historically speaking, there could be no other mediation of that Spirit to humanity than through him who has taught us, once and for all, by word and action, in his life and in his death, what it is to be a "Son of God."